

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 4-5, 9-12, and 16-17 without prejudice, and amend claims 1-3, 6-8, 13-15, and 18-21 as follows:

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1. (Currently Amended) A head slider for use in a disk drive unit, comprising:  
~~wherein~~ generally flat air bearing portions ~~are~~ formed in parallel on both sides of a ~~side~~ surface of ~~said~~ the head slider, which flies above a disk medium, at an air outflow end thereof in such a manner that said ~~flat~~ air bearing portions are raised ~~higher by a step~~ than a slider from a main body of the head slider, and;

wherein a head portion comprising head elements and a first protection film portion for protecting said head elements is provided adjacent to an air outflow end of one of said air ~~bearings~~, bearing portions;

~~whereas~~ a dummy head portion comprising only a second protection film portion is provided adjacent to an air outflow end of ~~the other~~ another of said air bearing ~~portion portions~~, top surfaces of said ~~protection films~~ head portion and dummy head portion being formed lower by a step with respect to said head slider main body than top surfaces of said air bearing portions; and

a third protection film portion formed adjacent to said first and second protection film portions, ~~said head slider being characterized in that:~~ said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~on air outflow sides thereof are~~ being formed

lower by a degree which is ~~greater than a difference in level~~ between said top surfaces of said  
air bearing portions and said third protection films film portion.

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2. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 1, wherein ~~the a~~  
distance in a longitudinal direction of said head slider of an area ~~where the~~ of said top surface  
of ~~said protection film on~~ said head portion is ~~formed lower is made~~ substantially equal to ~~the~~  
a distance in ~~the~~ said longitudinal direction ~~of said head slider~~ of an area ~~where the~~ of said  
top surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said dummy head portion is ~~formed lower~~.

3. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 2 1, wherein ~~the a~~  
distance in ~~the a~~ longitudinal direction of said head slider of an area ~~where the~~ of said top  
surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said dummy head portion is ~~formed lower is made~~ longer  
than ~~the a~~ distance in a said longitudinal direction ~~of said head slider~~ of an area ~~where the~~ of  
said top surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said head portion is ~~formed lower~~.

4-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 1, wherein  
~~locations of the~~ said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~which~~  
~~are formed lower~~ are substantially level with ~~the a~~ flying height of ~~a side of a main body~~ said  
surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium.

7. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 1, wherein ~~the locations of the~~ said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~which are formed lower~~ are positioned higher than ~~the~~ a flying height of ~~the side of said main body~~ said surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium.

8. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a plurality of pads are provided on ~~the side of said main body~~ said surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium for avoiding ~~the~~ a sticking of ~~said~~ the head slider to said disk medium when said disk medium is at a stop.

9-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A magnetic disk drive unit, comprising ~~in a box~~ body:

a spindle motor for rotating at least one disk medium, and

a head slider, further comprising ~~in turn~~ a head for reading data from and writing data to said at least one disk medium, said head slider being mounted via a head suspension on a distal end portion of a carriage which is driven by a voice coil motor and able to perform seeking relative to recording tracks formed on said at least one disk medium;

wherein generally flat air bearing portions are formed in parallel on both sides of a ~~side~~ surface of said head slider, which flies above said disk medium, at an air outflow end thereof in such a manner that said ~~flat~~ air bearing portions are raised ~~higher by a step~~ than a slider from a main body of said head slider,

wherein a head portion comprising head elements and a first protection film portion for protecting said head elements is provided adjacent to an air outflow end of one of said air ~~bearings~~ bearing portions,

~~whereas~~ wherein a dummy head portion comprising only a second protection film portion is provided adjacent to an air outflow end of ~~the other~~ another of said air bearing ~~portion portions~~, top surfaces of said ~~protection films~~ head portion and said dummy head portion being formed lower by a step with respect to said head slider main body than top surfaces of said air bearing portions, and

wherein a third protection film portion is formed adjacent to said first and second protection film portions, said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~on air outflow sides thereof are being~~ formed lower by a degree which is ~~greater than a difference in level~~ between said top surfaces of said air bearing portions and said third protection films film portion.

14. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 13, wherein ~~the~~ a distance in a longitudinal direction of said head slider of an area ~~where the~~ of said top surface of said ~~protection film on~~ said head portion is ~~formed lower is made~~ substantially equal to the

a distance in the said longitudinal direction of ~~said head slider~~ of an area ~~where the~~ of said  
top surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said dummy head portion is ~~formed lower~~.

15. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 14 13, wherein  
~~the~~ a distance in ~~the~~ a longitudinal direction of said head slider of an area ~~where the~~ of said  
top surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said dummy head portion is ~~formed lower is made~~  
longer than ~~the~~ a distance in a said longitudinal direction of ~~said head slider~~ of an area ~~where~~  
~~the~~ of said top surface of ~~said protection film on~~ said head portion is ~~formed lower~~.

16-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 13, wherein  
~~locations of the~~ said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~which~~  
~~are formed lower~~ are substantially level with ~~the~~ a flying height of ~~a side of a main body~~ said  
surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium.

19. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 13, wherein ~~the~~  
~~locations of the~~ said top surfaces of said head portion and said dummy head portion ~~which~~  
~~are formed lower~~ are positioned higher than ~~the~~ a flying height of ~~the side of said main body~~  
said surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium.

20. (Currently Amended) A head slider as set forth in Claim 13, wherein a plurality of pads are provided on ~~the side of said main body~~ said surface of said head slider main body which flies above said disk medium for avoiding ~~the~~ a sticking of said head slider to said disk medium when said disk medium is at a stop.

21. (Currently Amended) A head slider for use in a disk drive unit, comprising:

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a slider main body having at least one air bearing portion on ~~said~~ the head slider which flies above a disk medium at an air outflow end thereof in such a manner that said at least one air bearing portion is raised ~~higher by a step than~~ from said slider main body; and

a head unit provided adjacent to an air outflow end of said slider main body having a head portion ~~comprised of~~ comprising head elements and a first protection film for protecting said head elements, and projecting from a base portion thereof;

wherein a top surface of said base portion is ~~in accord~~ substantially level with a top surface of said slider main body;

wherein said head portion is formed adjacent to one of said air bearing ~~portion~~ portions and a top surface ~~thereof is~~ of said head portion being formed lower than that of said air bearing portion; with respect to said slider main body, and

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2 wherein a rear end surface of ~~the projection~~ said head portion projecting  
from on said base portion projects ~~inside~~ from said one of said air bearing portions in a  
direction of said airflow less than a rear end surface of said base portion.

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